

GET INVOLVED!

Please Contact us

- If you would like to volunteer to help transcribe letters and update our abuse reports that are then sent to high level VA officials.
- If you would like back issues of our newsletters or to be placed on our mailing list.
- If you would like to contribute an article to our newsletter
- If you would like to see the reports detailing the abuse that FedUp! has collected
- If you know of any lawyers that would be willing to advise or take on a class action lawsuit
- If you have any ideas that would help stop the abuse and better conditions of prisoners in Virginia.
- If you would like a copy of our 45 page resource guide, The VA Prisoner Directory Action – free to VA prisoners and family and friends of a VA prisoner.

Please Consider Donating Money To:

VIRGINIA PRISONER'S LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

This fund will be used to press class action lawsuits on grounds of abuse, censorship and other issues that would improve prison conditions in Virginia.

You can make check or money orders payable to FedUp! and send to 5125 Penn Ave Pittsburgh, PA 15224

FedUp! is a campaign fueled by prisoners, family members and loved ones of the incarcerated, as well as concerned citizens, who oppose the abuse and torture of people imprisoned in Virginia, specifically Red Onion State, Wallens Ridge and Keen Mountain. We are looking for allies and help with this campaign to further expose the great injustices occurring.

Contact us:

FedUp!

**5125 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15224
412-802-8575 fedup@riseup.net**

**Kevin (Rashid) Johnson #185492
Red Onion State Prison
P.O. Box 1900 Pound, VA 24279
<http://www.massartillery.com>**

To see the Human Rights Watch Report on
Red Onion State:

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/redonion/>

To see a great website on the reality of
Virginia Prisons go to: www.vadoc.com

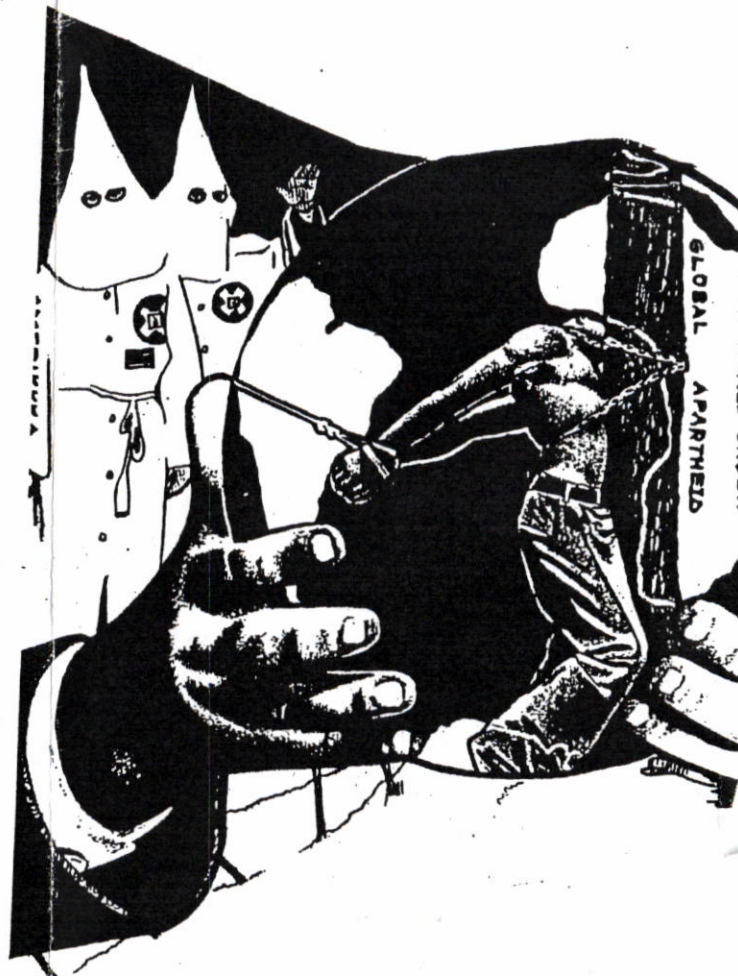
Please take time to write to the Governor of Virginia.
Tell him the abuse is uncalled for and that the
correctional officers need to be held accountable for
these actions.

**Tim Kaine, Governor of VA
State Capital- 3rd Floor
Richmond, VA 23219
Phone Number 804-786-2211**

Write the Warden of Red Onion State Prison.
Demand to know why he let's this abuse continue.

**Tracy S. Ray, Warden of R.O.S.P.
P.O. Box 970 Pound, VA 24279
Phone 276-796-7510**

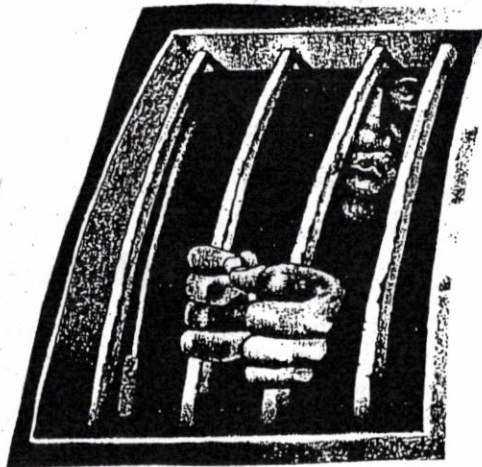
STOP THE ABUSE OF PRISONERS IN VIRGINIA



WE ARE FED UP!

A flurry of activism followed the summer, 2000 death of electro-shocked prisoner Lawrence Frazier at Wallens Ridge State Prison. Wallens Ridge is one of two super maximum facilities in western Virginia. One prisoner who has done time in both Wallens Ridge and the nearby, Red Onion State Prison, has carefully documented that while the activism has died down, the racist abuse and torture of prisoners in these secretive facilities continues.

Kevin (Rashid) Johnson, currently an inmate at Red Onion State Prison (ROSP), documented in a recent expose (released on October 31 of 2004 and supplemented on January 1 2005), numerous incidences of Correctional Officers beating restrained prisoners; and using tear gas, electrical stun weapons, and five-point ambulatory restraints to punish prisoners who do not, Rashid writes, "show appropriate deference and submission to guards." The expose details denial of meals, confiscation of mails, and Correctional Officers enabling the suicide of prisoners. According to inmates, the officials of Red Onion State are failing to let prisoners file the standard grievance process leaving little evidence of abuse and obstructing any further litigation.



Rashid's complaints are not new. Investigations of cruel and unusual punishment, including torture, have dogged ROSP and its sister supermax facility Wallens Ridge State Prison (WRSP) since the prisons were opened in 1998 (ROSP) and 1999 (WRSP). These prisons have been the target of a 1999 Human Rights Watch report ("Red Onion State Prison: Super-Maximum Security Confinement in Virginia"), letter-writing campaigns by Amnesty International in 1999 and 2000, and a 2000 investigation by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice (under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act).

Following the intensive struggle for changes in ROSP and WRSP, Ron Angelone, Director of the Virginia Department of Corrections, resigned on May 9, 2002. The states of New Mexico and Connecticut, and the District of Colombia recalled the state and district prisoners they had bought cells for in WRSP. These and other changes seemed to indicate progress in Virginia's compliance with Constitutional and international conventions on protection of human rights. However, the Commonwealth failed to implement any of the recommendations made by Human Rights Watch in 1999, and reports of excessive force and brutality continue to pour from the prison.

Rashid sent his exposé, "Racism and Brutality Equal Kind and Usual Punishment in Virginia", to Governor Mark Warner on 31 October, 2004. The Governor routed the document to Sgt. D. Tate at ROSP. According to Rashid, Sgt. Tate is "both the ROSP investigator and a supervisor in the super-segregation unit – he has himself been involved in various prior abuses of prisoners, myself included..." In fact, Tate is named frequently in Rashid's exposé and proceeded to find himself not guilty of any allegations.

Prisoners must be treated with respect for their dignity as human beings and for their fundamental rights, whatever their crimes.

Since January of 2005, FedUP!, has been receiving complaints from inmates including beatings of prisoners while in handcuffs and shackles, one instance of a broken arm and another of a fellow needing 18 stitches, medical staff complying with guards to cover up abuse, medical neglect in general, administration refusing to look into inmate grievances, personal property destroyed, and throughout Wallens Ridge, Red Onion State, and Keen Mountain racism is playing a major role and a contributing factor into the abuse. The constant flow of letters FedUp! has been receiving exposes that these events are not isolated instances but prove a pattern of abuse.

In the first addendum (January 1, 2005), Rashid ends with the following statement: "The state's government is using a poor, economically depressed and exploited segregated White community to brutally oppress a vastly non-white prisoner body, exactly as impoverished whites were deliberately used to savagely brutalize Blacks with license and impunity during the chattel slavery process of this same rural Amerikan south. There is clearly no interest and no intent by government officials to reign in such abuses. [In fact, the situation is] created by such authorities."